



July 8, 2020

**CITY COUNCIL URGES STATE TO FORTIFY AND CONSIDER DELAYING
PRE-TRAVEL TESTING PROCESS**

The Honolulu City Council today unanimously approved Resolution 20-164, FD1, urging the State to strengthen its pre-travel COVID-19 testing protocol that would allow passengers to bypass a mandatory 14-day quarantine if they test negative prior to arriving. But it also calls for the State to consider pausing its plan, which is scheduled to take effect on August 1, due to the recent troubling number of cases both here and other states.

Resolution 20-164, FD1 – URGING THE GOVERNOR TO TAKE ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO LIMIT TRAVEL-RELATED SPREAD OF COVID-19 TO KEEP OAHU SAFE FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ALIKE – recommends implementing additional safeguards including a second diagnostic viral test to incoming travelers, who tested negative, before letting them avoid quarantine. It also asks the Governor to be prudent and reconsider implementing its pre-travel plan until the numbers of new cases on the mainland and in Hawai‘i have dropped significantly.

From the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, Dr. Scott Miscovich of Premier Medical Group Hawai‘i has been advocating for more testing. Today, he told members of the Council that he supports Resolution 20-164, FD1 because the serious spike in number of cases across the country is alarming.

“I strongly feel we’re not ready to reopen our state on August 1 because the surge we’re seeing on the mainland is extremely concerning,” said Dr. Miscovich. “We need to be more proactive. We need to do everything possible to contain COVID-19 and prevent community spread. That’s why it makes sense to require incoming passengers take a second diagnostic viral test if we’re going proceed with pre-travel testing.”

Mayor Kirk Caldwell’s administration has also advocated for a comprehensive approach and multiple safeguards to protect the safety of residents and a recently re-opened economy.

“We cannot afford to give up the hard-fought gains that responsible residents and island business have won by adhering to the new COVID safety standards,” said Josh Stanbro, the City’s chief resilience officer. “The administration supports the principles in Resolution 20-164, FD1 because we’ve always thought more testing is better than less, and that the quarantine is a critical backstop that must be strictly enforced to protect our community.”

Chair Emeritus Menor, who introduced Resolution 20-164, FD1 has been pushing for more stringent measures even before state leaders announced the August 1st pre-travel protocol. He now feels it’s more important and prudent for the State to pause its plan to bypass mandatory quarantine.

“My concern is when we open our islands once again, we will be attracting visitors who will display the same kind of cavalier and irresponsible attitudes regarding the health of the public, as they’ve shown in the mainland communities in which they reside,” said Chair Emeritus Menor. “In light of these concerns, this resolution is urging the Governor to seriously consider delaying implementation of the Governor’s pre-boarding testing plan beyond August 1. We also need to follow the advice of the medical professionals who are calling for the adoption of the best safety protocols to protect the health of Hawaii’s people.”

Resolution 20-164, FD1 include the following precautionary steps:

- Requiring incoming travelers with a negative pre-boarding test to take a second follow-up diagnostic viral test within seven days of the initial test in order to confirm the negative result, (test could be paid from an additional incoming passenger fee);
- Working with private laboratories already processing tests in Hawai‘i to significantly ramp up testing capacity;
- Implementing effective tracking and contact tracing of incoming passengers, including developing a mobile phone application, or “app,” to track and trace persons with whom an infected traveler has come into contact, and mandating its use by travelers;
- Developing a surveillance system to monitor high-risk settings in the tourism industry and providing testing for industry employees who come into frequent contact with visitors;
- Ensuring that the systems and resources are in place to effectively enforce the mandatory 14-day self-quarantine for travelers who have not undergone and passed pre-boarding testing;
- Ensuring that the information about the pre-boarding test requirement and these additional measures is well publicized to alert those with plans to travel to Hawai‘i.

For more information on this resolution or the Honolulu City Council, please go to the following web sites: <http://www.honolulucitycouncil.com> or <http://www.honolulu.gov/council>

###

Media Contact:

Louise Kim McCoy
Communications Director
Honolulu City Council
(808) 768-5078